



FORTY NINTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BLACKET ASSOCIATION TO BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 OCTOBER IN THE OLD BELL DUNCAN STREET FROM 7.30 PM

AGENDA

- Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (12 October 2017);
- Election of committee members and office bearers.
 Becky Colegrave, Phil Cullis and Eric Thomson are standing down from the Committee. Pauline Platt and Arlene Doherty have reached the end of their 3 year terms of office and are happy to stand for re-election. Anne Henderson (4 Mayfield Terrace) is nominated to the Committee as Treasurer and Emma O’Bryen (40 Blacket Place), is nominated to the Committee as Social Convener. Nominations are invited for the post of Website and database manager.
- Planning report;
- Treasurer’s report;
- Neighbourhood Watch report;
- Blacket Avenue working group report;
- Any other competent business;

Committee 2016–2017

CHAIR	Ian Chisholm	11 Dryden Place
TREASURER	Becky Colegrave	12 Alfred Place
MINUTES SECRETARY	Fiona Courtney	52 Blacket Place
NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH	Stanley Bird	4 Dryden Place
PLANNING/SHRUBBERY	Hugh Mackay	42 Blacket Place
PLANNING	Richard Scothorne	7 Alfred Place
WEBSITE/CONTACTS	Eric Thomson	50A Blacket Place
NEW RESIDENTS/CARDS	Arlene Doherty	56 Blacket Place
COMMUNICATIONS	Pauline Platt	27 Mayfield Terrace
SOCIAL CONVENER	Phil Cullis	44 Blacket Place

CHAIR'S REPORT OCTOBER 2018

For the most part 2018 has been a successful one for the five streets. In relation to planning issues this has been a relatively quiet year. We are keeping an eye on the development of the Minto Hotel site; see the planning report below.

In May 2017 the Council launched a consultation about a proposed new cycle route linking Holyrood Park with Ratcliffe Terrace going through the Blackets. Cyclists would enter from the Dalkeith Road via Blacket Place and exit via Blacket Avenue or Mayfield Terrace. It is proposed that Blacket Avenue would be two way for cyclists but one way for motorists. The Blacket Association's main concern was to maintain the entry from Minto Street into Blacket Avenue; otherwise there would be no entry from the west into the Blackets. The Association's response to the consultation is on the Blacket website. No further developments have occurred since the last AGM.

Social Events

In May an architectural tour of the Blackets was conducted by Richard Scothorne and Hugh Mackay, our Blacket history and architectural experts. The tour was very well supported with more than thirty residents attending. Other residents expressed disappointment that they could not attend so we will be arranging similar tours next spring. Meanwhile an architectural trail guide of the Blackets, which was written some years ago, has now been revised by the Association. A link to a copy will be put on the website.

The annual Open Gardens evening was held on Friday 15 June. We would like to thank the Clarks (10 Blacket Place), the Cooks (24 Blacket Place), the Fletchers (32 Blacket Place), and the MacCormicks (82 Dalkeith Road), for the chance to have a look around their gardens. Despite the slightly overcast weather, over a hundred residents gathered in the open areas of Alfred Place for drinks and the chance to chat with neighbours. The search is underway for gardens for the 2019 event!

Social events are an important part of life in this area, and we are always looking for new ideas that reflect the many and varied interests (and ages) of residents. We would like to hear any suggestions you may have for future events.

Links with External Organisations

Ian Chisholm is our representative on the Grange and Prestonfield Community Council. This link enables us to keep up-to-date with Edinburgh Council activities that may affect

us directly or indirectly. We circulate items that we think will be of interest to residents whose email addresses we have. The Community Council has supported us in our objections to a number of planning applications, which has added weight to our case. Minutes of Community Council meetings are available on the website at grangeprestonfieldcc.org.uk

PLANNING REPORT

Edinburgh Council planners send us each week a list of new planning applications and decisions. We review the Newington applications to identify what may affect the Blacket Conservation area and, in particular, the five streets. When there is anything which we feel affect the amenity of the area we will contribute a written view – which may set out the reasons why we oppose the application.

This has been a quiet year for planning applications and this may be a trend as most of the opportunities for development in the 5 streets have been taken. Although some applications are small in scale we are keen to ensure there isn't a risk of the cumulative loss of important details and features. It has been good to see some great new railing restorations go up and we are hoping to see more of these - ideally to the original designs! We have been keeping a close eye on the Minto Hotel development, now nearing completion. The general view seems to be that the emerging Minto Street frontage will be a great improvement on the hotel - our objections to a number of details in the design of this frontage (one of which would have destroyed the symmetry of the southerly villa) were all taken account of in the final design. Our objections also led to changes in the design of the glass fronted infill block of two apartments which is still to be added between the two villas so we will wait and see what that looks like - but it is a shame to see the integrity of the two original villas restored only to see them quickly compromised again. There have been some minor changes sought by the developer during development which were approved. We objected to a new drive and gateway off Blacket Avenue which would have involved removing an old holly tree, but this application was subsequently withdrawn.

THE SHRUBBERY WORKING PARTY REPORT

Shrubbery report

Vinca minor planted in small plots in Blacket Place, Blacket Avenue and Mayfield Terrace, after soil enriched with horse manure and bone meal.

Mahonias at Dalkeith Road entrance to Blacket Avenue have been watered with liquid fertiliser during the dry period and subsequently the soil enriched with horse manure, bone meal and slow release fertiliser.

The shrubs in the area of Strawberry Hill Nursery have received horse manure and bone meal dressing. Dandelion control has been undertaken.

Lower parts of the lime trees in Blacket Place were trimmed by a very enthusiastic working party. Volunteers always welcome!

With Council permission we have been slowly killing off the elm tree stump at the corner of Blacket Place and Blacket Avenue (smokers` corner). *Vinca difformis*, a taller Vinca, has been planted around this stump in the hope of removing the eyesore. If you see people smoking here, standing on the Vinca and leaving their cigarette ends, perhaps you could speak to them politely, tell them they are walking in horse manure, destroying the plants and leaving cigarette ends that take 100 years to decompose. Bringing their own ash tray would help!

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The Association this year again received several reports of criminal activity ranging from thefts and attempted thefts of and from cars, bikes and motorcycles to burglaries and attempted break-ins. Fortunately, these were far fewer in number than the other "opportunistic" crimes. The Association issued several alerts to residents highlighting the dangers and, based on advice from Police Scotland (which is available from their website), suggested ways of reducing the risk of thefts from homes and gardens. The Blacket Area is regarded by criminals as a "high value" area and it is therefore worth targeting for "an easy job" - car windows left open, keys left in sight, bikes left unlocked. As always, residents have to be aware of the risk and to stay alert. If you see anything suspicious or people behaving strangely, do not hesitate to report it."

The Blacket Association

Summary of accounts for year to 31st August 2018

	2017	2018
	£1,517.38	£1,146.72
		Opening bank account 1st September
		Income
£530.00		Subscriptions
£126.00		Open Gardens Event
£6.00		Card Sales
£135.00		Plant Sale Event
	<u>£797.00</u>	<u>£786.80</u>
		Expenditure
£280.83		AGM Costs
£43.21		Printing Newsletters
£193.62		Landscaping
£40.00		Cockburn Association membership
£610.00		New fence Blacket Ave/ Dalkeith Rd
	<u>£1,167.66</u>	<u>£229.31</u>
	-£370.66	Increase/Decrease in funds for period
		£557.49
	£1,146.72	Closing bank account 31st August
		£1,704.21

Treasurer's report

Income was received from the same four core sources as last year: subscriptions, proceeds from the Open Gardens event, card sales and the spring Blacket plant sale. The majority of subscriptions are received via a Standing Order into the Blacket Association bank account, which cuts down on administration for everyone involved and everyone is encouraged to complete a simple form to set this up. The Open Gardens event raised a similar amount to 2017. Elizabeth Blackadder card sales from the print run in 2014 continue to boost income and we still have stock available if anyone would like to purchase (5 for £5). Finally, the plant sale contributions were lower than 2017, reflecting fewer attendees on a rather poor weather day. The bank balance increased significantly this year in large part due to the reduced AGM costs following the committee listening to feedback and selecting a different venue for the 2017 AGM. Landscaping costs were also lower, and there were no exceptional costs for new fencing. Overall, funds increased by £557 over the period. After serving for five years as Honorary Treasurer, it is time to pass on the role and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support over the period. I look forward to seeing the new initiatives that are developed to allow residents to continue to socialise and improve our treasured local environment.

Honorary Treasurer, Becky Colegrave

